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Congresswoman Betty McCollum
Statement for the Record
Martin Luther King Day Recognition (H. Res 1002)
January 13th, 2010

Ms. McCollum: I rise today in strong support of H. Res 1002 which recognizes the efforts of those who serve their communities on Martin Luther King Day and promotes the holiday as a day of national service.

During his life, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. recognized the power of service to strengthen communities. In 1994, Congress made Martin Luther King Day a national day of community volunteerism to further commemorate Dr. King's legacy of peace, community, and justice.

On January 18, 2010, people of all backgrounds across the country will come together to improve lives, bridge social barriers, and continue the pursuit of achieving Martin Luther King's vision of a fair and equitable society for all Americans.

At home in Minnesota, and across the nation, many will volunteer to serve their communities by working at food banks, helping the homeless, and improving schools. Minnesotans have a proud tradition of civic engagement. In a study conducted by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Minneapolis-St. Paul was ranked number one for volunteer rates in a large city.

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said "An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity." As we begin this New Year at time when many of our neighbors are struggling to find employment, I can think of no better way to strengthen our nation than to come together and create positive change in our communities. I encourage everyone to get involved this Martin Luther King Day and to browse <http://www.usaservice.org> for volunteer opportunities. Every American who will volunteer on Monday and those that continue to serve throughout the year deserve our gratitude and appreciation.

I yield back the balance of my time.